

Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC)

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT)

WISE COUNTY/TOWN OF BIG STONE GAP WATER SHORTAGE

SITUATION REPORT # 10

1530 Hours October 17, 2005

New Information in Bold Italics

WEATHER

Forecast:

Short-term Forecast through October 23, 2005: Clear today then becoming partly cloudy. High temperatures during the daytime ranging from the mid 60's to the mid 70's. Low temperatures during the nighttime ranging from the mid 40's to the low 50's. Winds W-SW 5-10 MPH. 20% chance of precipitation Friday night, Saturday and Saturday night.

EXECUTIVE ACTION

EOC Activation:

The Virginia VEOC is at Increased Readiness condition and augmented with additional staffing.

State of Emergency:

On October 7, 2005, Governor Mark R. Warner declared a state of emergency to exist for Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to assist these localities in responding to a critical water shortage. Governor Warner directed appropriate assistance be rendered by agencies of the state government to respond to needs in Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap to alleviate adverse conditions created by the water shortage.

Executive Order 99 (2005) has been amended to impose an Open Burning Ban on Wise County and the Town of Big Stone Gap, effective immediately and continuing until such time as local officials advise the Governor it should be lifted.

The Governor directed limited activation of the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) and the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) to coordinate the provision of assistance to the impacted localities.

Local Situation:

Local Emergency Declared: Wise County declared a local emergency on September 26, 2005.

Local Emergency Declared: Scott County declared a local emergency on October 15, 2005, specifying agricultural drought. There is no indication that this situation will impact the provision of 250,000 gallons of water per day by Scott County to Big Stone Gap.

STATE AGENCIES

Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

The VEOC is polling Southwest Virginia localities and the Virginia Cooperative Extension Service to anticipate long-term drought conditions and the impact on agricultural resources.

A VDEM Hazardous Materials Officer and VDEM Local Support Services Division Director are coordinating with Wise County, the Town of Big Stone Gap, and state/local agencies to identify needed resources and continue logistical support. A VDEM Reservist is on site at the Wise County Command Post to assist with logistics and finance.

The VDEM Legislative Liaison is providing information to local General Assembly members representing the locality and Congressman Boucher's office.

The VEOC is coordinating requests for assistance from the locality and state agencies and compiling a list of available resources.

The VEOC is facilitating conference calls with the locality and state agencies.

Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)

At the direction of Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, VDOF is coordinating with Wise County on implementing a local burning ban.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

The local Health Department completed the assessment of special needs population in the area. A total of 256 individuals with special needs have been identified.

The VDH is preparing kits for personal care workers/Home Health and home delivered meals that contain water suitable for disabled populations, baby wipes and sanitizer.

The Virginia Department of Health Roanoke Regional Public Information Officer (PIO) is on scene to coordinate public information dissemination.

The Office of Drinking Water has offered to help the Town of Big Stone Gap test water.

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) has been put on alert for possible activation to assist the special needs shelter.

Virginia National Guard (VNG)

VNG continues distribution and blivet support mission. The nine blivets are placed at the following locations: one at each of the three public schools, one at the Hospital, one at the Nursing Home, one serving the community college/DMME, one at the Special Needs Shelter, and two supporting the Portable Water Processing Plants (one to be in place today).

VNG is maintaining the blivets.

State Fire Marshall's Office

The SFMO is monitoring water pressure and supply for facilities using internal fire suppression systems.

Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)

The VDOC is refilling blivets.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)

The VDOT approved the utilization of Right-of-Way for course of water line between Town of Appalachia and Big Stone Gap.

The VDOT is prepared to use its 1610 AM radio system to keep residents informed on water shortage in addition to existing message boards.

A VDOT tractor is being used to pull stainless steel tankers of water.

Department of General Services/Consolidated Labs

Continues to test water samples from alternate water sources.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Bacteriological testing on the Norton-Big Stone Gap connection is within the acceptable limits and the "boil water" notice for the Powell Valley area was lifted on Saturday, October 15, 2005.

The Town of Big Stone Gap plans to begin installing a 6-inch water line on Monday, October 17 connecting to the Town of Appalachia's water system. Consideration is being given to pumping water from the Powell River at Appalachia to assist with supplying Appalachia's water system, with the potential to produce 300,000 gallons of water per day when up and running to supply the Towns of Big Stone Gap and Appalachia.

The Town of Big Stone Gap leased a portable water processing plant to produce potable water from the Powell River, and is expected to be operational by mid-day Monday, October 17. A "boil water notice" will be placed on the system until testing is complete. A second plant is scheduled to arrive on Tuesday, October 18, and projected operational date is Saturday, October 22.

Raw water input to the town of Big Stone Gap water system totaling 1.5 million gallons per day (gpd) allows the town to keep all users supplied with 'town' water at the "conservation rate" of production. While the water plant is producing the required 1.5 million gpd this production is supplemented by 600,000 gpd.

Projected additional inputs are: Leased Package Plant #1 500,000 gpd from Monday, October 17, 2005; Town of Appalachia 250,000 gpd from Thursday, October 20, 2005; and Leased Package Plant #2 500,000 gpd from Saturday, October 22, 2005.

By Saturday, October 22, 2005 the town is projected to have an input of 1,850,000 gpd. This will be sufficient to maintain supply to all "conservation rate" demands, plus a cushion of 350,000 gpd.

This cushion may not be a noticeable surplus because of previously reported system losses. However, it could fill the area holding tanks that are presently low. The town relies on production rates sufficient to supply daily demand and to keep full a number of holding tanks throughout the service area. The daily "conservation rate" of production does not allow for them to be refilled.

Numerous businesses and residences have purchased portable water storage tanks. Town officials and VDH are developing procedures for advising the public on cleaning and sanitizing private water tanks as well as inspecting connections to individual systems to prevent backwash into the public system. Businesses have also leased portable restroom facilities.

A full battery of chemical tests on Clinch Haven Farms well and water drawn from the Hairy Hole Cave began today.

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